ALTERNATIVES FOR THE DESTINY OF EUROPEAN CIVILISATION

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PUBLISHERS

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INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHERS

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OFFICE:
C-1/4, Iqbal Centre,
Opposite Radio Pakistan, M. A. Jinnah Road,
Karachi-74200 (Pakistan) Tel: 77 22 764

First Edition. . . . . November 1982

PRICE.

Published by Akhlaq Husain
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHERS
KARACHI—(PAKISTAN)
Printed at
Ahmed Brothers Printers Karachi.

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ATHEISM, ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY, THE ISLAM OF JESUS AND OF MUHAMMAD (P.B.U.H.)

The present article intends to examine some of the main intellectual tendencies which seem to characterise the cultural milieu of the contemporary civilization of the West.[1] The burden of its argument is that the ideological conflict of the present day world,[2] while apparently pertaining to a life and death struggle of incompatible opposites, is, nevertheless, unified in its materialistic outlook on life. In fact, it is this fundamental agreement of a world-view which in itself is responsible for the character of this life and death struggle. Irrespective of the suicidal consequences of this conflict, this article tries to point out that this materialistic outlook on life is not just a piece of untoward accident, but the natural result of the way Christian Europe has

1. When I use the word West, I wish to refer to the present day civilization of Europe as a whole. America and Russia are regarded as off-shoots of the socio-historical forces let loose in the history of Europe since the period of Renaissance.
2. As manifested in the bitter hostility between world-wide Capitalism and International Commusism; between political Liberalism on the one hand and regimented Socialism, Fascism, and Nazism on the other; between Anarchism and Syndicalism; between the aspirations of the Individual or the glorification of the State; between racial segregation and human equality; between Democracy and Dictatorship; between Disarmament and Proliferation of Atomic Weapons between the theoretical aspirations of Secularism and the persecution of religious minorities; between colonialism and national self-determination; between Apartheid and Black Man's Supremacy, between Zionism and the rights of the people of Palestine, etc.

handled, or mishandled, the essentially unadulterated teachings of Jesus)[3] and the way it has resisted an open-mined evaluation of the beautiful teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H)[4] Since the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) came to confirm the teachings of Moses and of Jesus as well as those of the other Prophets of God, it is high time that the West honestly exposes itself to an unprejudiced evaluation of the claims of the teachings of Muhammad (P.B.U.H.).

If, within the course of half a century, the human race, having been forced to suffer the shock of two World Wars, still continues to be confronted, not only with a long-drawn cold war,[5] but with the looming spectre of an unprecedented Armageddon of International Ballistic Missiles; if the successive experiments of the League of Nations and the United Nations Organization, with their vested interests and veto powers, have been the instruments more of pious, illusory hopes than the actual realization of the world-wide desire for Peace; if the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a promise more honoured in its breach than in its proper fulfilment, it is high time to inquire whether the standards we have been setting up for our civilization have been as propitious as we have believed them to be.

For the first time in human history, States have come into being, which not only preach atheism but ruthlessly impose it on their own people; which not only authori-

3. The present writer hopes *Insha Allah* to trace out the different stages in the development of this materialistic outlook in a separate article.
4. The initials 'PBUH" shall be placed within brackets immediately after the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as abbreviation for the words (Peace be upon him).
5. The cold war between Communistic Russia and Capitalistic America has not been quite so cold, either. The world has equally witnessed, after the Second World War, the blazing flames of localised warfare in Korea, Greece, Hungary, Viet Nam, India-Pakistan, Pakistan-Bangla Desh, Arab-Israel, Labanon, Turks and Greeks in Cyprus, Angola, Eritrea, Philppines etc.

tatively *establish* the atheistic *way of life*[6] within their own frontiers, but carry on an international struggle to *force* it upon the rest of the world. Parallel to this, in the theistic world, God has been forced to abdicate in favour of a Secular State, for the Theocracy, "the Kingdom of God' with which Christian Europe has been making several successive experiments since the time of Constantine the Great until the Russian Revolution of October, 1917, has, in each case,[7] turned out to be, not so much 'the Kingdom of God on earth," as much as the domination of extremely intolerant and thoroughly aggressive sectarian priests whose theory of salvation in this and the other world has always been linked up with the authority and control of a particular Church. The word "Theorcracy", therefore, in the cultural context of Christian Europe, has come to be associated with a repugnance which does not seem to be shared by words like "democracy",[8] "autocracy,"[9] "aristocracy",[10] "plutocracy",[11] "oligarchy",[12] or "dictatorship of the proletariat". Hence, that section of the human race which does, today, profess some kind of theism, shies away from the use of the phrase "Kingdom of God."[13] Lip-service continues to be paid to some god, but the One and the Only True God of the Universe, to Whom each separate human being is personally accountable for all his actions, is safely ignored in personal, social as well as state affairs. Times out of number, it shall be seen that the worship of the god of one's own self, with all one's desires, whims and prejudices is

6. This phrase can reasonably be equated with the word "religion".
7. Control of the Church under Byzantine emperors, sometimes in favour of Arianism, sometimes in favour of the Ahtanasian creed; the Holy Roman Empire, Calvinistic theocracy in Switzerland; the Moravians and the Waldenses in Europe; the Puritan commonwealth in England and in New England; the role of Jesuits in Counter–Reformation, the Anabaptists etc.
8. Government of the demos=the populace;
9. Absolute supremacy of an individual;
10. Government of the privileged class;
11. Government of the wealthy.
12. Government of a few.
13. Though Jesus devoutly prayed for it to be realized within this world, imploring "Thy will be done, as it is in Heaven".

allowed to run riot with one's own society, or is allowed to be expanded into local, racial or national gods which bring about widespread havoc in the international field.

The socio-cultural context of Christian Europe presents the sad spectacle of a situation in which controversy *in* religion led to a controversy *about* religion. People, accustomed only to one kind of religion, but duped for a long while by false theories, started questioning whether religion ever had any relevance to human affairs at all. Since, across the course of centuries in Europe, Christian religion was taught to be considered the best of religions, once the Christian religion had been laid aside as inadequate or as irrelevant, the vacuum created by the displacement of religion led the people to make experiments with a large series of isms.[14]

The successive experimentation of a large variety of all-embracing, socio-economic, cultural systems as well as the contemporaneous trial of divergent and, very often, mutually contradictory ideologies,[15] only demonstrates the urgent, underlying need for a thoroughly comprehensive, a permanently stable and a properly balanced solution of human problems. The oscillations between the contrasting poles of tradition and change, individual and society, liberty and control, democracy and dictatorship, freedom of enter-

14. It is significant to note that people so much believed Christianity to be the best possible religion, that they did not consider it worth while to turn to any other religion. They preferred their *isms*.

15. The modern world has been, and still is, divided in its loyalty between different alternatives for social orders Capitalism, Communism, Socialism, Fascism, Nazism, Syndicalism, Anarchism, Imperialism, Colonialism, Nationalism, Internationalism, Eastern type of Democracy or Western type of Democracy, Democracy and Dictatorship; Constitutional or absolute Monarchy; Republicanism or Benevolent Monarchy or Benevolent Dictatorship; Economic Autarky and European Common Market; Control over proliferation of Atomic Weapons but lack of equal International Inspection; Industrialisation and Preservation of the Natural Environment; Profession of Secularism with a Persecution of Religious Monorities, e.g. in North Ireland, in India, in Cyprus, in Thailand, in Philippines.

prise and regimentation, reveals a state of irresolution in the society as a whole. While it shows the profusion, the vigour and the ingenuity of the European mind to discover ever new alternatives for their social problems, which go on becoming ever more complicated as these new solutions are put to trial, it equally shows that the Christianity they so much profess to believe in, has been incapable of providing that healthy social equilibrium which would answer the physical, the moral and the spiritual needs of the human society; that perfect individual and social integration of all kinds of human resources which is suggested by the desire for the Kingdom of Heaven.[16] Human ingenuity has had to enter into its proper, though imperfect, role only after the operations of the divine direction have been found wanting. How and why this has come about will be the subject of this article.

In order to bring out clearly the effects of the distortion of the teachings of Jesus on the one hand, and the cultivation of an agelong prejudice against an open-minded evaluation of the teachings of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) on the other, this article will first trace out, in brief, the course of the development of the orthodox Christian creed[17] in collaboration with the State-enforced organization of the Christian Church[18] and subsequently invite

16. Compare this with the Muslim attitude. Whatever the character of inner conflicts or sectarian differences, no section of the Muslim community thinks that the teaching of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is not to be taken as a whole, or that it does not provide a permanent solution for all problems of human existence in all walks of life. The Muslims are, therefore, ready to face the challenge of modern technology with perfect equanimity. In fact, the West will itself gain by shoving aside its age-long prejudice and by opening its mind and heart to listen to the teachings of the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH).

17. An attempt is made to distinguish, here, the teachings of *Jesus himself* from the teachings of the Christian Church *about* Jesus.

18. The parallel of the State-enforced philosophy of dialectical materialism in Communist Russia and the creed of the supremacy of the Aryan race in Nazi Germany suggests itself. Europe can legitimately boast of State-enforced creeds in the twentieth century also.

attention to the way the Church prevented an access to the teachings of Islam, including the prevention of a popular awareness of the Gospel of St.Barnabas. This article will be concluded with an elucidation of the essentially universal teachings of Islam, an explanation of the purpose of revelation by means of Prophets, of whom Jesus was one, and Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) the last. It was not without significance, therefore, that the forthcoming advent of Muhammad (P.B U.H.) had been so appropriately foretold by Jesus himself.

It is not the intention of this writer to attack, or even to show disrespect, to the religious conviction of his Christian friends. But, believing as he does [19] in the religious mission of Jesus as a Prophet of Allah (who, in all humility, prayed and worked for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth and who anticipated and announced the arrival of the "ruler of the world" in the person of Muhammad after him,[20] the present writer is led to emphasise a difference between the actual and historically verifiable teachings of Jesus himself as a person[21] and the teachings of the present-day orthodox Christianity about the person of Jesus.

19. The Muslim is taught to believe in the essential unity of the Character, function and message of all the Prophets of God. Coming from the Same Source, the Creator, the Sustainer, the Sovereign of the Universe, they reveal the Word of God to Man. It is through following them, and them alone (each one of them during his incumbency), that one can be assured of having won the pleasure of God. The Holy Quran makes a fortright pronouncement

'Lo! this your religion is one religion, and I am your Lord, so worship Me!" إن هذه أمتكم أمة واحدة وأنا ربكم فاعبدون *(al-Quran 31:92)*

20. *The Holy Bible,* St. John, 14:30.

21. Since the actual, historically original sources of the teachings of Jesus are not extant at all, one is perforce, led to piece together evidence from what is now regarded as the Biblical canon on the one hand, and from the known facts of history concerning persons who gave a different interpretation to the teachings of Jesus than the one now accepted as orthodox. On its own merits, at least the plausibility of this explanation is as valid as the official creed of today. But the relationality of the explanation on the one hand and the proclamation of the truth which came through Muhammad (PBUH) confirms it.

The essential teachings of Jesus which are in harmony with the teachings of the Holy Prophet can be summarised as follows:

(1) that there is only ONE GOD (ALLAH), the Creator, the Sustainer, The Sovereign of the entire Universe, Who must be obeyed and worshipped without any associate. Jesus and Muhammad both are servants, slaves of Allah.[22]

(2) that it is through His Prophets (or Messengers) that Allah's Word is revealed to mankind. Since Allah is at one and the same time the Creator and Sustainer of the world of nature and the Source of the Word of God, أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ . there is a natural harmony between the Word of God and the Works of God; so that he who obeys the Word of God[23] equips himself with the means to realize the potentialities of his existence. The Word of God, revealed through His Prophets, thus constitutes the real source of human guidance as well as the proper criterion of civilized behaviour. Allah's Prophets become the models of good human action and the blessings of this world and the Hereafter are received only through following the teachings of God received through these Prophets.

(3) that man is accountable for all his deeds and misdeeds, which he will render an account for, on the Day of Judgment.

22 *Acts* 4 27,30; 3 13; Mark 10.18 "Why do you call me good. No one is good but God alone.'

23. One must carefully dissociate this word from the implications of the Neo-Platonic "*Logos.*'

Jesus and Muhammad both were prophets[24] and no more. But, as Prophets they had a great mission to fulfil. Jesus not only foretold about the arrival of Muhammad,[25] he even said that there shall be no Prophet after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.). Jesus as a Prophet never claimed any glory unto himself.[26]

The difference between the actual teachings of Christ and the teachings of Christianity will be better appreciated if we undertook a brief examination of the development of the present-day orthodox Christian creed[27] and marked out its growth through a variety of conflicting enunciations, showing that the different versions of the creed had had to be enforced through an oppressive organization of the Christian Church on the one hand, and through the council and authority of devout Byzantine or Roman emperors, on the other.[28] Since the Byzantine or Roman Emperors, on their part, were eager to unify the people, they were equally eager to unify the Church and were, therefore, finding it convenient to impose a rigorous conformity with the views defined by several, successive council of bishops.[29]

24. As regards the role of Jesus as a Prophet, *St. John* 9:17 makes a specific mention that Jesus was considered a Prophet. When Jesus says, *"As long as I am in the world,* I am the light of the world', (John :9,5), the emphasis on the italicised pharase is important, because when Jesus is no longer in the world, it shall be the turn of Muhammad (PBUH):

"O Prophet! Lo! We have sent thee as a witness and a bringer of good tidings and a warner. And as a summoner unto Allah by His permission, and *as a lamp that giveth light."* (al-Quran, 30:45–46).

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ۝ وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجًا مُنِيرًا ۝

25. See page 24 of this book.

26. John 8 50. 'I do not seek my own glory."

27. i.e. the ideas about Trinity, Incarnation and Atonement.

28. Cf. the role of Constantine the Great, Constans and Constantius with respect to the controversy regarding Arianism, or the role of Theodosius II concerning the controversy between Eutychianism and Nestorianism.

29. Cf. the character of debates and definitions in their progress through the Council of Nicaea (325 A.C.) the First Council of Constanitinople (381); the Council of Ephesus, (431) the Council of St. Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, (448). the Robber Synod (449); the Council of Chalcedon (451), Second Council of Constantinople (553); the Third Council of Constantinople (680) and the Synod called by Photius in 867 which was

What these councils debated and how they managed to come to their conclusions would be sufficient to convince us that the present day creed is only a much later, progresively developing accretion superimposed on the actual teachings of Jesus Christ.

The New Encyclopaedia Brittanica says that Creeds (العقيدة) "do not divide Islam into clearly marked confessional groupings or denominations such as exist in Christianity" [30] "In Christianity.....there are over 150 officially recognized creeds and confessions. In part this is because the church was from the beginning, doctrinally oriented, making the acceptance of a specific kerygma (proclamation) a condition for membership." the same Encyclopaedia further says *"creeds were variable in wording and content and only gradually became standardized."*[31]

As regards the Apostles' Creed, the above mentioned authority clearly states that "the fifth century legend that the Twelve Apostles were its authors is without foundation. *Not until the 8th century is it quoted in its present wording.*"[32]

Very early in the history of Christianity, there was a group known as the Ebionites who were regarding Jesus as a Prophet of God., According to Origen[33] there were two groups of this sect of the Ebionites: the Judaic Ebionites

questioning the intended addition of the "filioque" clause in the Creed by the Pope of Rome. It was not until the Council of Chalcedon (451) that a *Definition* that Jesus is both true God and true man was forthcoming, and not until the Third Council of Constantinople (680) that a separate will and operation was officially recognised in each of the natures of Christ.

30. *The New Encyclopaedia Brittanica*, Macropaedia, Vol. V, 15th edn., p.244.
31. *ibid.*
32. *ibid.*
33. Origen, 185?-254?, reputed Christian scholar. He attempted to synthesize the fundamental principles of Greek philosophy, particularly those of Neoplatonism and Stoicism, with the Christianity of creed and Scripture, so as to *prove* the Christian view of the universe to be compatible with Greek thought.

and the Gnostic Ebionites. "The Judaic Ebionites held closely to Mosaic law and regarded Jesus as a miracle-working *prophet* and St. Paul as an apostate"[34] Similarly, the Gnostic Ebionites believed Christ to be a Spirit, invisible to men, and gave him the title "*Prophet* of Truth".

The presence of these groups of Ebionites would indicate that inspite of attempts at the transformation of Jesus's teachings, there were persons who continued to regard him as a Prophet.[35] Afterwards, St. John wrote his Gospel with a view to develop the idea of the incarnation of Logos. He is, therefore, a Christian apologist before the Hellenistic world. He represents the typical attitude of those Christians who are eager to satisfy the pagans of Rome, Greece and Egypt, that the message of Christ is meaningful also for them. As Christianity continued to be a persecuted religion until the Edict of Milan (313), the Christians could not afford the leisure of entering into a controversy concerning the question whether Jesus should be more appropriately regarded as a Prophet or as a son of God. Nevertheless, we can discover several attempts at repudiating the idea of Incarnation or the idea of the divinity of Jesus. Marcion (flourished c. 144), and his followers known as Marcionites, rejected the real incarnation of Christ. Theodotians, a small sect formed c. 190 by Theodotius, (which lasted until the end of the fourth century), taught that Jesus was a man, who became Christ only after his baptism.[36] Paul of Samosata held that Jesus was a man and received the Christ as a power from God at a later time. The Paulicians (between the third and the seventh century) had rejected "sacraments, images, the Cross and much of the Bible. Some consider them a survival

34. *Columbia Encyclopaedia*, p. 586, under "Ebionites" *Italics mine*.
35. Cf. the following verse of the Bibel which establishes that Jesus in his own time was being recognized as a Prophet:
'And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, 'Who is this?" And the crowds said, "This is the *prophet Jesus* from Nazareth of Galilee." (*Matthew* 21:10-11)
36. A concept which was later used by Monarchism and Adoptionism.

of early Christianity."[37] Aetius (d. 367), a Syrian theologian and his disciple Eunomius (c. 335-393?) a Cappadocian theologian, wanted strictly to stick to monotheism. They were not prepared to recognize Jesus as the son of God. Eunomius held that the essential attribute of God is that He has no origin, whereas the Son, begotten and created out of nothing, is *unlike the Father* in having an origin. It is interesting to remember, in this case, that Eunomius was a bishop (having been made a bishop, c. 361, of Cyzicus), though he was frequently in trouble and repeatedly exiled when Theodosius restored orthodoxy. The clause in the Nicene creed which contains the words "Son of God, begotten of the Father before all the worlds," was probably inserted as a conscious denial of the Anomoean stand. (Eunomius' followers were called *Anomoeans).*[38] Eunomius had rejected even the Semi-Arian compromise formula that the Son is like the Father. Compare the verse of the Holy Quran

وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌۢ ۝٤

And there is none comparable to Him. (112:4).

The development of the present day orthodox Christianity, however, is different from the direction of the teaching of Jesus. Alexandria had been the centre of Hellenism, Gnosticism and neo-Platonism. Once St. Paul had chosen to translate the Syriac word which meant, "Abd" عبد in Arabic into the word "Son,"[39] sufficient scope was provided for extending its implications in terms either of Logos or of incarnation, in accordance with the anthropomorphic tendency of the Greeks.[40] This resulted in a

37. *Columbia Encyclopaedia*, under "Paulicians" p. 1499.
38. From Greek *anomoion* = unlike).
39. The word has equally been translated as 'slave" and 'servant" and the word 'son' has been used in the gospels for persons other than Jesus also.
40. "By the time of Homer, Greek religion had assumed an anthropomorphic form that is to say the powers of nature had been conceived in the semblance of men and women, with the needs, desires and failings of mankind." Cf. the images of Hercules, Zeus, Venus, etc. Cf. also Euhemerus's explanation that the "gods of mythology had their origin in kings or heroes defied by those whom they had ruled over or benefited. (Harvey, Oxford *Companion to Classical Literature*, p.358, and 170)

number of attempted definitions concerning the nature of Christ in his relationship with the Father, in his relationship with human beings, and in the nature of the Father's[41] relationship with human beings. Gibbon tells us how at the end of the first century, St. John, the fourth evangelist "gave a Christian interpretation to the Platonic cosmology[42] he revealed that Jesus Christ was the incarnation of Plato's Logos, or Reason, which had been with God from the beginning. This eternal relationship between the Logos and the Father was now disputed by Arius. Arianism, which was to last until the time of Theodoric and Clovis, became a major faction in the Christian world."[43]

The main contention of Arianism was that it refused to recognize Jesus as either "eternal or equal with the Father.' By the time Constantine the Great had become the emperor, he found that the Christian world was divided in its loyalty between the Arian and the Athanasian interpretation of the creed. He therefore convened the Council of Nicaea in 325 to have the matter settled. It is not possible in a short article to cover the long Christological controversies that spread over centuries to arrive at an acceptable formula[44] regarding the character of the Trinity. Suffice it to say that it was not until the First Council of Constantinople in 381 that the so-called Nicene creed was composed (325). Once it had been accepted that Jesus was the "son" of God, the Christian world continued to fight on issues such as the following;

41. In narrating the Christian's point of view, I am perforce compelled to use the terminology employed by them. I ask God's forgiveness for using a terminology so meaningless to me.

42. It could, with a greater amount of fairness, be said that St. John offered a Platonic and a neo-Platonic interpretation to the teachings of Christ, and distorated these teachings in the process.

43. Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, an abridgment by D.M.Low, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, (Chatto and Windus) 1960, p. 311.

44 Even then it has not been quite 'acceptable ', as will be seen in the following pages. It was only acceptable to a set of bishops who were installed or deposed for reasons other than one's loyalty to the pursuit of Truth, or the teachings of Christ himself. It was intended to be 'acceptable" only in its capacity to reconcile certain warring factions.

whether Jesus was 'of the same substance as God, or of a similar or like substance; of the same nature or similar nature; was he a man at all; if man, how could he be God, if God how could he be man; was he born a God or born a man; if he was born a man, how could the Virgin Mary be considered "the Mother of God;: did he have single nature or two natures; if he was combining in his person two natures, did he have one will or two wills. The controversies which centre round the so-called heresies[45] are actually the debates concerning these issues getting further complicated with the involvement of a large variety of vested interests of the bishops, archbishops and emperors.

It is, therefore, important to examine the role the bishops were supposed to play in the definition of the creed. How they were appointed, deposed, exiled, or persecuted to suit the triumph of one or another opinion may not, at present, be pursued. Their significance, however, both in the organisation of the Church and in the definition of creed, may be noticed.

The missionary work of the Christian Church was originally undertaken by the apostles, who set up a kind of travelling ministry. But they found Churches of Christian communities in various cities of the Empire, such as Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonika, and Rome.[46] By the second century of the Christian era, the travelling ministry of the apostles had come to an end. Christendom had come to be organized into local churches, each of them being superintended by a bishop.[47] The Bishop had thus come to be regarded as the apostles' representative and the embodiment of the Faith. R.H.C. Davis says that

45. Apollinarianism, Monarchianism, Adoptionism, Sabellianism, Arianism, Eutychianism, Nestorianism, Monophysitism, Monothelitism etc.

46. vide the Epistles of St. Paul.

47. The word "bishop" is an Anglo-Saxon modification *(bisceop, biscop)* of the Latin word *episcopus* derived from Greek *episkopos* (epi=over+skopos= inspector)

the significance of the bishop's position was due to the fact that many churches were founded by the apostles *before the four Gospels were written.*[48] *The early Church's teaching, therefore, could not be founded exclusively on Holy Writ.* Even after the Gospels had been written they were not considered superior to the living tradition of the Church, since they were simply attempts to put the tradition into writing, and *there was no official Canon of Scriptures in the West till 382.*

It was, therefore, a matter of real importance that a bishop should have received oral instruction in the Faith from a recognized authority, such as one of the apostles or their pupils. The 'apostolic succession' was not a formula but a living reality and a necessity.[49]

One must, therefore, remember that the controversy regarding the nature of the creed is being undertaken by these successors of the apostles. They are not philosophers or laymen but properly ordained priests, bishops and archbishops from Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Rome who are disputing among themselves how to define the mission[50] of Christ and how to mould the opinion and practices of the Christians. This dispute, further, is carried over centuries and spiritual issues are settled and unsettled by these divinely inspired agents in such a way

48. According to Sir Frederic Kenyon, the earliest of them, St. Mark's, would have been written, c. 65 A C. and the latest, St. John's c. 95 A C. Others, would date them later still.

49. R.H.C.Davis, *A History of Medieval Europe,* London, Longman's Green and Co., 1958, 69-70.

50. Jesus himself defines his mission in the following words: "I must preach the *good news of the kingdom of God* to other cities also; for *I was sent for this purpose".* (Luke 4:43).
Further, when a person, eager to learn more about *eternal life* addressed Jesus as 'Good Master', Jesus refused to take any credit or any glory to himself. He knew where glory was due. So he said *"Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God* but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19.16–19

that they are always "half-settled." The methods employed to settle these issues calls for yet further exploration and makes it obvious how continuously and consistently these official agents of orthodox Christianity have been *divinely* ordained.[51]

The First Council of Nicaea (325) was the first ecumenical Council convened by Constantine the Great to solve the problems raised by Arianism. The Council adopted as a test of faith a formula based on a simple baptismal creed presented by Eusebius of Caesarea; this was not however the misnamed Nicene creed. The formula included the word "homoousion" (Con-substantial) used concerning the Son and the Father. The word, suggested by Hosius of Cordoba, the president of the Council, became the touchstone of orthodoxy and the bugbear of Arianism[52] for it established the divinity and the equality of the Son in the Trinity. After the Council of Nicaea had defined its creed, St. Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem after 348, was exiled three times for his objection to the dominant Arianism, but steadfastly joined St. Basil the Great in trying to unite the Church on the teaching that Christ is *like* the father in substance (homoiousianism). His *Catechetical Lectures* present an exposition of the 4th century doctrine which he favours. He even has his comments in favour of transubstantiation. St. Cyril may have been the ultimate author of the Nicene creed. While, St. Cyril and St. Basil the Great, may, thus, have been honestly motivated to defend the creed arrived at the Council of Nicaea, the Arians who were not willing to recognise the divinity of Christ, had to take recourse,

51. I do not wish to cast a general aspersion against all the bishops of Christianity, there were, certainly, quite a few sincerely desirous of maintaining their honest position as regards the creed. But the creed, once formulated, in a fashion away from the teachings of Christ, was creating difficulties, no *honest man* could have easily solved. If *honest men*, however, *were ranged on either side* without a proper reference back to the genuine authority, matters were going to be worse.

52. The Arians had 'disclaimed the use of any terms or definitions which could not be found in the Scriptures.' (Gibbon, op. cit., p. 313).

first, to their practice of Christanity as they believed it to be true, and secondly to the likely influence they could exercise over the emperor. The involvement of the emperor, in the controversies of the Church, through this and subsequent Councils, further complicated the issues.

The very character of the conflict as carried on among the bishops, the tactics employed to secure the management or control of these bishoprics or patriarchates, the strategy used to gain a majority of votes at different councils or Synods, the manoeuvres adopted to carry the sympathy of the masses,[53] and the cunning exercised to manipulate the will of the emperor[54] would, each one of them, have very little connection with the kingdom of God, so piously and so sincerely preached by Jesus. As it is not possible to describe all this in detail in such a short article as this, a few illustrations would suffice.

In 428 A.C., Nestorius, an abbot of Antioch, who had been appointed the patriarch of Constantinople, opposed the use of the title "Mother of God" for the Virgin Mary. His argument was that while the Father "begot" Jesus as God, Mary bore him as a man. St. Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria took a stand against this position. Hence in 431 was convened the Council of Ephesus by Theodosius II and Valentinian III.

> Adherents of both parties came; St. Cyril of Alexandria had behind him the clergy and laity of most of the Christendom, while Nestorius was backed by Theo-

53. vide the reaction of the Egyptian masses in favour of the Patriarch of Alexandria, as given in Muhammad Abu Zuhra, *Muhadharat fi al-Nasraniah*, Matba a Yusuf 1385 A.H.-1966 A.C., p. 148.

54. Constantine who called and influenced the votes in the Council of Nicaea, did not become a Christian until about the time of his death, and at that time he was baptised by an Arian bishop.
If the Emperor Constans had been won over by Athanasius, the Emperor Constantius was siding with the Arians. (vide, Gibbon, op. cit., pp. 318 324–328)

dosius and the Antiochene hierarchy. The council, late in starting, was opened by St. Cyril before the Antiochene bishops arrived. It anathematized Nestorius and his views. The Antiochenes arrived and, accusing Cyril of *deliberately rushing the vote, deposed* him. Soon afterward the papal legates arrived and the council reconvened, reaffirmed its position, and *excommunicated* the Antiochenes. The controversy continued until Theodosius held a hearing at Chalcedon between the disputants. He exiled Nestorius and ordered the consecration of a new patriarch of Constantinople, and the council broke up. *Its chief dogmatic pronouncement was that from the very words of the Nicene creed it follows that Mary may be called the Mother of God,......*[55]

This is logic: *ruductio and absurdum.* Once the Nicene creed has been taken to be orthodox, whatever follows *from its words* must be true. What follows from the words of the Scriptures, nobody seemed to know, for the authenticity of the Scriptures themselves could be genuinely doubted.

An equally illuminating example of the manner in which the orthodox creed passed through the stages of different formulations is offered by the story of Eutyches (c. 378—452), the sponsor of Eutychianism (the first phase of Monophysitism). Eutyches.

"was the leader in Constantinople of the most violent opponents of Nestorianism, among whom was Dioscurus, successor to St. Cyril as partriarch of Alexandria. Whereas Cyril had agreed with the Antiochenes in 433 that Christ had two natures, Eutyches and Dioscurus insisted that Christ's humanity was absorbed

55. The *Columbia Encyclopaedia*, New York, Columbia University Press, p. 624, under 'Ephesus, Council of'.

in his divinity and that to accept two natures at all was Nestorian. When Theodoret attacked Eutychianism (447), Dioscurus retaliated by anathematizing him, and *Emperor Theodosius II, who was friendly to Eutychianism,* confined Theodoret to his diocese (448). But Eutyches was accused of heresy and deposed by a council called by St. Flavian, partriarch of Constantinople (Nov. 448). Eutyches appealed to his friends and Theodosius called a council to meet at Ephesus, Aug, 1, 449. This, the famous Robber Synod (Latrocinium), was *disgraceful* from the beginning. Dioscurus presided and *disenfranchised* most of the clergy inimical to Eutyches. The "Council" *reinstated* Eutyches, *declared* him *orthodox*, and *deposed* Flavian and Eutyches' accuser, Eusebius. Flavian denied the council's authority; the papal legates denounced the council's proceedings. *The soldiery, called in by Dioscurus, compelled an affirmative vote;* Flavian was imprisoned and died of rough handling by the members of the "synod". The legates barely escaped. Theodoret and the patriarch of Antioch were deposed."[56]

The Council of Chalcedon (451) which tried to right the wrongs of the Robber Synod, had to wait for the death of the emperor Theodosius (450) before such wrongs could be rectified. It was at this Council, i.e. the Council of Chalcedon (451), that the *Definition* of the orthodox position was formulated, which makes the second Person of the Trinity, both true God and true man; his divine and human natures were now believed to be distinct without confusion and inseparably united to concur in one person. It had, thus, taken more than four hundred years after Jesus to *define*, irretrievably, the orthodox position; and yet, the *definition* was not thorough enough. For, it again raised the issue of the single nature of God, and *therefore*, of Jesus (since, by now Jesus had been equated with God). Hence,

56. The *Columbia Encyclopaedia*, New York, 1956, p.641, under "Eutyches"

the Monophysites challenged the orthodox creed of Chalcedon and believed that in Jesus Christ there were not two natures, but one.

> In the East, the Council of Chalcedon was declared invalid (c. 476) by the emperor........ and the Pope excommunicated the East for abrogating the Council of Chalcedon. The schism ended in 519 when Emperor Justin I enforced the creed of Chalcedon.[57]

Yet, there was ground for further controversy. Monotheletism (Gr. = one will), a 7th century opinion had to be condemned as heretical by the Third Council of Constantinople in 680A.C This doctrine, by declaring that Christ operated but with one will, although he had two natures, opposed the intent of the Council of Chalcedon. Obviously, the idea that Jesus cannot be perfectly identified with God continued to agitate the minds of believers. Those who had believed that there was really a difference had insisted on two natures. Once the formula of two natures was accepted, (which, of course, had been accepted more to unify the believers than to describe the real character of Jesus himself) there were persons who raised the issue of one will or two wills in Jesus. The following quotation will throw further light on the reasons which were motivating the emperors to embrace one or the other doctrine concerning Christ.

> Monotheletism was first proposed in 622 and was immediately adopted by the Emperor Heraclius I *for political reason*[58] *as a compromise* between Monophysitism and orthodoxy. *The Eastern hierarchy, while doubtful of the dogma, tended to support* Heraclius. In 631 Cyrus of Phasis, patriarch of Alexandria, promulgated a Monothelite thesis, which was opposed by Sophronius, a Palestinian monk (later patriarch of Jerusalem). At Sophronius, behest, Sergius, patriarch

57. *Ibid.*, p. 1309, under *"Monophysitism"*. Italics mine.
58. Italics mine.

of Constantinople, wrote to Pope Honorius I for advice. The pope replied with a letter which apparently supported one will, but *forbade further discussion of the question.* Soon afterwards (638) Heraclius published the *Ecthesis,* which defined Monotheletism as the official imperial form of Christianity. When *the Ecthesis* arrived in Rome, Pope Severinus, Honorius' successor, immediately condemned it, *ex cathedra.* Heraclius, before he died, disclaimed the *Ecthesis* and attributed it to Sergius. Heraclius' successors, Constantine III and Constans II, however, continued to enforce the heresy. *Popes John IV and Theodore I anathematized Monotheletism, but they could do little in face of imperial support. Constans II withdrew the Ecthesis and promulgated instead the Typus, a decree flatly forbidding the mention of one will or two wills or one energy or two energies in the Second Person.* The *Typus* was favourable to the Monophysitism established in the empire, but would have silenced the orthodox. The *Typus was intended to make peace, but it brought on the crisis of the controversy. In* 649 Pope St. Martin I convened a Lateran Council to condemn Monotheletism and was subsequently *seized by the emperor, imprisoned and exiled. St.* Maximus was the most vigorous opponent of Monotheletism. The accession of Constantine IV to the imperial throne brought toleration for the Catholics. After the Council of Constantinople, in 680, Monotheletism died out except among the Maronites in Syria. This, the last of the Christological controversies, enhanced the prestige of the papacy, which took the lead in opposing official imperial heresy.[59]

It may be observed here that it is for "political reasons' that creeds are adopted. The religious hierarchy does not hesitate to support an emperor even while itself it is not so

59. *Columbia Encyclopaedia,* under "Monotheletism". p. 1309.

sure of the dogma. The Pope was consulted but, the publication of *Ecthesis* was motivated by the interests of the empire. This made it incumbent on the successor of Pope Honorius to condemn it *ex cathedra*. The emperor exonerates himself from the responsibility and lays it to Sergius, the patriarch of Constantinople. Heraclius dies and his two successors continue to enforce the heresy. The Popes may continue to hurl anathemas, but can "do little in face of imperial support." The formula *Typus* which replaces the *Ecthesis* on behalf of the emperor Constans II itself becomes the source of further trouble.

It is during the time of Constans II that Armenia and Asia Minor had been invaded by the Muslims who had taken Cyprus and were threatening Sicily and Constantinople. Naturally, there was no further room for Christological controversies. For, they were stilled by the more forceful logic of the Holy Quran in this part of the world.

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝
وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝

Say. He is Allah, the One!
Allah, the eternally Besought of all!
He begetteth not, nor was begotten.
And there is none comparable unto Him.
(Surah 112 *The Holy Quran*)

The Christian dogma, the orthodox creed, therefore, is not so much a mystery[60] as much as an actual *confusion*[61] between the Hebraic function of a Prophet and the Greek

60. It is not a mystery, but the illogical pursuit of a fallacious argument round the person of Jesus carried on through the course of history by bishops (in councils, and out of councils), instituted, deposed, anathematied or silenced by emperors.

61. In the literal as well as in the idiomatic meaning of the word. (con+fusion= poured together, fused together, = meeting, merging of different things into the same, blurring the separate outlines of each as well as of the whole).

concept of Incarnation. It is a confusion of three separate persons of God, Jesus and the Holy Ghost[62] into a single entity. This dogma has been enunciated, supervised, supplemented and defended through the organization of a Church in close collaboration with the administration of the empire. Persons who have ever dared to oppose the decrees, the definitions or the religious authority of this organization have been subjected to depositions, anathemas, excommunications, exile and death.[63] A Church which had condemned Wycliff as a heretic for his anti-clerical tendencies, which burned John Huss of Bohemia and Jerome of Prague for daring to differ from its ruling authority, a Church which widely persecuted the Anabaptists because of their advocacy of the separation of the Church and State, which subjected Copernicus, Galileo to persecution and burnt Giordono Burno for independent thinking, also put one of the Gospels of Jesus Christ on the Index of Forbidden Books. It prevented any publication of the book to prevent its own people from listening to the prophecy of Jesus regarding the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The Gospel of St. Barnabas not only specifically mentions the advent of the future Prophet Muhammad (Munhammanna)[64] with a number of characteristics which identify the real Paraclete referred to by Jesus in his Gospel of St. John,[65] but establishes without a shadow of doubt the drift away from the teachings of Christ. That is why once the organization of Church had started on its path of

62. Photius, the patriarch of Constantinople, in a synod in 867 questioned the proposed inclusion of the *filioque* pharse in the creed (qui ex Patre *filoque* procedit = the Holy Ghost who proceedeth from the Father *and the Son.* This clause had been inserted into the text at the end of the 9th century and "was probably not used in Rome itself until 1014. Eastern Christians continue to reject this addition, though *now* they do not generally regard it as heretical." *Encyclopaedia Brittanica*, Macropaedia, V., p.245.

63. Michael Servetus who, convinced of the erroneous position of Trinity, published De *Trinitatis Erroribus* (1531) and *De Trinitate* (1532) was the subject of persecution not only of the Roman Catholic Church but equally of Calvin. He was burnt for his anti-trinatarian views on October 27, 1553.

64. Cf. Syed Abul Ala Maududi, *Tafhimul Quran,* V 461–475.

65. Cf. the Appendix I.

maintaining and developing a creed independent of the teachings of Jesus, the Gospel of St. Barnabas was put on the Index of Forbidden Books.[66]

It is, therefore, not Jesus who has failed Europe or Christianity. It is the orthodox version of Christianity which has failed Jesus not only by transforming his teachings beyond recognition, but by building up an organised resistance to the teachings of Muhammad (P B.U.H.), who came to restore the teachings of Jesus to their pristine purity. The same Source which made Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus His instruments of revelation, selected the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) to reveal the Truth that is not only sufficient but necessary for mankind, calling for submission to the ONE and ONLY TRUE LORD OF THE UNIVERSE (Allah) to the Kingdom not of human beings, but of ALLAH Himself. The deification of Jesus as god, perverted the character of his mission. The necessary mediation of bishops, for a proper communion with God, prevented a direct relationship between the ONE INVISIBLE GOD and His creatures. The virgin birth of Jesus as well as the accident of his departure from the world without his getting married, cultivated amongst the bishops the encouragement of an ascetic attitude. Later, the church organization, in collaboration with the State, not only became an oppressive instrument of intolerance, it became a shroud drawing a veil around the geniune teachings of Jesus to prevent them from reaching the people under its domination.

If Europe is genuinely sincere in its desire to learn the actual teachings of Jesus after such a long lapse of time and through so large a course of distorations, there are two ways open for her:

(1) to vefify for herself the claims of the Gospel of St. Barnabas as a truthful report about the teachings of Jesus,

66 By St. [illegible]lasius at the end of the 5th Century. Cf. Appendix II.

(2) To study these teachings afresh under the light of the message of Muhammad (P.B.U.H.).[67]

(1) A study of the Gospel of St. Barnabas would, apart from convincing us that the teaching of Jesus was strictly Monotheistic, also demonstrate with greater certitude that the prophecy of Jesus regarding the arrival of "Paraclete"[68] refers specifically to the future advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.)[69] The Encyclopaedia Brittanica says.

> Evidently regarded as scriptural in Egypt, the Letter of Barnabas was included in *Codex Siniaticus,* a fourth century Greek manuscript of the Bible and it was also quoted by the influential Presbyter Clement of Alexandria (d.c. 215). It was less highly regarded elsewhere and few Christians continued to read it.[70]

Obviously, even this testimony of the writer of the article in the *Encyclopaedia Brittanica,* proves that though recognised authentic in the 4th century, it ceased to exercise interest for later readers. But the reason, in this case, has been the conspiracy of silence, the prevention of its use by the Christians since it was put on the Index of Prohibited Books by St. Gelasius at the end of the fifth century.

67. It may be urged that the great majority of the former Christian world accepted his interpretation so much so that it became Muslim and constitutes the large portion of Arab Muslim world today.
68. Gospel of St. John, 14:16-17, 25–26, 30 15 26; 16.7, 12-5.
69. Cf. Muhammad Abu Zuhra, *Muhadharat fi al-Nasraniyah,* Matb'a Yusuf, 1385A H.–1966 A C , pp. 57 68. Chapters 43–44, 96, 97, 220 of the Gospel of St. Barnabas have clear references for the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Cf. also Abul Ala Maududi, *Tafhimul Quran,* Vol. V pp. 461–475.
    Cf. also Appendices I & II for further details.
70. *Encyclopaedia Brittanica, Macropaedia* I p. 823.

(2) The fact that Jesus says that this Periklytos[71] would remind the world about Jesus's teachings is borne out by the Holy Quran's reaffirmation in the belief in the One and Only God (Allah), the belief in the role and function of the Prophets (or Messengers) of Allah as human beings chosen to reveal the Word of God and the responsibility each individual has to bear to obey God's commands and fulfill the Word of God.

The Quran boldly declares

يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَا تَغْلُوا۟ فِى دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلْحَقَّ ۚ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ
رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُۥٓ أَلْقَىٰهَآ إِلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِّنْهُ ۖ فَـَٔامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ ۖ وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ ثَلَٰثَةٌ ۚ
ٱنتَهُوا۟ خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ ۚ إِنَّمَا ٱللَّهُ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥٓ أَن يَكُونَ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ ۘ لَّهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ۝ لَّن يَسْتَنكِفَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ أَن يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِّلَّهِ وَلَا ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ
ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۚ وَمَن يَسْتَنكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِۦ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا ۝

O People of the Scripture ! Do not exaggerate in your religion nor utter aught concerning Allah save the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, *was only a messenger of Allah,* and His word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers, and say not "Three"—Cease! (it is) better for you! Allah is only One God. Far is it removed from His Transcendent Majesty that He should have a son. His is all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is sufficient as Defender.

The Messiah will never scorn to be a slave unto Allah nor will the favoured angles. Whoso scorneth His service and is proud, all such will He assemble unto Him. (4:171,172)

71. In all likelihood the real word in the Greek version of the Gospel of St. John should have been Periklytos ("heard of all around, famous, renowned, glorious" which is the exact Arabic equivalent of "Muhammad" and the Syriac Muhamanna ') Cf. Appendix I

Further, it declares

وَلَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَحْسِرُونَ ۝
يُسَبِّحُونَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ ۝ أَمِ اتَّخَذُوا آلِهَةً مِنَ الْأَرْضِ هُمْ يُنْشِرُونَ ۝ لَوْ كَانَ
فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ فَسُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ۝ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ
وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ ۝ أَمِ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً ۖ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ ۖ هٰذَا ذِكْرُ مَنْ مَعِيَ وَذِكْرُ
مَنْ قَبْلِي ۗ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۙ الْحَقَّ فَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ۝ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ
إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ ۝ وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمٰنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحٰنَهُ ۚ بَلْ عِبَادٌ
مُكْرَمُونَ ۝ لَا يَسْبِقُونَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ ۝ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ
وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضٰى وَهُمْ مِنْ خَشْيَتِهِ مُشْفِقُونَ ۝ وَمَنْ يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي إِلٰهٌ مِنْ
دُونِهِ فَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۚ كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الظّٰلِمِينَ ۝

Unto Him belongeth whosoever is in the heavens and the earth. And those who dwell in His presence are not too proud to worship Him, nor do they weary;

They glorify (Him) night and day; they flag not.

Or have they chosen gods from the earth who raise the dead?

If there were therein gods beside Allah, then verily both (the heavens and the earth) had been disordered. Glorified be Allah, the Lord of the Throne, from all that they ascribe (unto Him).

He will not be questioned as to that which He doeth, but they will be questioned.

Or have they chosen other gods beside Him? Say Bring your proof (of their godhead). This is the Reminder of those with me and those before me, but most of them know not the Truth and so they are averse.

And We sent no messenger before thee but We inspired him, (saying): There is no God save Me (Allah), so worship Me.

And they say. The Beneficient hath taken unto Himself a son. Be He Glorified ! Nay, but (those whom they call sons) are honoured slaves;

They speak not until He hath spoken, and they act by His command.

He knoweth what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot intercede except for him whom He accepteth, and they quake for awe of Him.

And one of them who should say. Lo! I am a god beside Him, that one We should repay with hell. Thus We repay wrong-doers. (21:19-29)

And again the Holy Quran urges the Absolute Unity of Allah.

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ وَلَدًا ۝ لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا إِدًّا ۝ تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنشَقُّ الْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ
الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا ۝ أَن دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَلَدًا ۝ وَمَا يَنبَغِي لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ أَن يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ۝ إِن كُلُّ مَن فِي
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَٰنِ عَبْدًا ۝

And they say The Beneficient hath taken unto Himself a son. Assuredly ye utter a disastrous thing.

Whereby almost the heavens are torn, and the earth is split asunder and the mountains fall in ruins,

That ye ascribe unto the Beneficient a son,

There is none in the heavens and the earth but cometh unto the Beneficient as a slave. (9:88-93)

If it is a fact that God does not have a son, it is urged that He is Pure, Absolutely Independent, for he who is interested in having a son, needs him, or in being partial to

some, lacks universality in fair administration.

قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا سُبْحٰنَهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا
فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطٰنٍ بِهٰذَا أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا
لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝ قُلْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا
يُفْلِحُونَ ۝ مَتَاعٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ نُذِيقُهُمُ
الْعَذَابَ الشَّدِيدَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ۝

They say Allah hath taken (unto Him) a son--Glorified be He! He hath no needs!

His is all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. Ye have no warrant for this. Tell ye concerning Allah that which ye know not. Say Verily those who invent a lie concerning Allah will not succeed. This world's portion (will be theirs), then unto Us is their return. (10:68-70)

The Prophets of Allah are entrusted with a *Message, a mission.*[72] They are human beings chosen to reveal the Word of God.

أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْتَغِي حَكَمًا وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكِتٰبَ مُفَصَّلًا وَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَعْلَمُونَ
أَنَّهُ مُنَزَّلٌ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ ۝ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا
لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمٰتِهِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝

Shall I seek other than Allah for judge, when He it is Who hath revealed unto you (this) Scripture, fully explained? Those unto whom We gave the Scripture (aforetime) know that it is revealed from thy Lord in truth. So be not thou (O Muhammad) of the waverers. Perfected is the *Word of thy Lord* in truth and justice. There is naught that can change His words. He is the Hearer, the Knower. (6:114,115)

72. With the full etymological significance of *being sent* appropriating nothing to themselves, at all.

The Holy Quran recognises the miraculous birth of Jesus and the chastity of the Virgin Mary.

ومريم ابنت عمران التي أحصنت فرجها فنفخنا فيه من روحنا وصدقت
بكلمات ربها وكتبه وكانت من القانتين ۝

And Mary, daughter of 'Imran' whose body was chaste, therefore, We breathed therein something of Our Spirit. And she put faith in the words of her Lord and His Scriptures and was of the obedient. (66:12)

But this is no special miracle happening in the case of Jesus alone, for it happened in the case of Adam, too, so that he and the entire race of man bears something of the Spirit of God.

ذلك عالم الغيب والشهادة العزيز الرحيم ۝ الذي أحسن كل شيء خلقه وبدأ خلق الإنسان من طين ۝
ثم جعل نسله من سلالة من ماء مهين ۝ ثم سواه ونفخ فيه من روحه وجعل لكم
السمع والأبصار والأفئدة قليلا ما تشكرون ۝

Such is the Knower of the Invisible and the Visible, the Mighty, the Merciful,

Who made all things good which He created, and He began the creation of man from clay.

Then He made his seed from a draught of despised fluid; Then He fashioned him and *breathed into him of His Spirit;* and appointed for you hearing and sight and hearts. Small thanks you give him. (32:6-9)

Hence those who give a particular significance to just this fact concerning Jesus and ignore the universal succession of Message from the time of Adam until the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad are not quite so fair to the truth revealed from God

لقد كفر الذين قالوا إن الله هو المسيح ابن مريم وقال المسيح يبني إسرآءيل اعبدوا
الله ربي وربكم إنه من يشرك بالله فقد حرم الله عليه الجنة ومأوىه النار وما للظلمين
من أنصار ۝ لقد كفر الذين قالوا إن الله ثالث ثلثة وما من إله إلا إله وحد وإن لم
ينتهوا عما يقولون ليمسن الذين كفروا منهم عذاب أليم ۝ أفلا يتوبون إلى الله ويستغفرونه
والله غفور رحيم ۝

They surely disbelieve who say: Lo! Allah is the third of three; when there is no God save the One God. If they desist not from so saying, a painful doom will fall on those of them who disbelieve.

Will they not rather turn unto Allah and seek forgiveness of Him? For Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (5:72-73)

Jesus, therefore, is to be recognised as a very honourable Prophet. The institution of Prophethood demands not sons or supernatural agents but human beings under divine guidance.

ما المسيح ابن مريم إلا رسول قد خلت من قبله الرسل وأمه صديقة كانا يأكلان الطعام
انظر كيف نبين لهم الأيت ثم انظر أنى يؤفكون ۝ قل أتعبدون من دون الله ما لا يملك لكم
ضرا ولا نفعا والله هو السميع العليم ۝ قل يأهل الكتب لا تغلوا في دينكم غير الحق ولا
تتبعوا أهوآء قوم قد ضلوا من قبل وأضلوا كثيرا وضلوا عن سوآء السبيل ۝

The Messiah, son of Mary was no other than a messenger, messengers (the like of whom) had passed away before him. And his mother was a saintly woman. And they both used to eat (earthly) food. We make the revelations clear for them, and see how they are turned away! Say: Serve ye in place of Allah that which possesseth for you neither hurt nor use? Allah it is Who is the Hearer, the Knower. (5:75-77)

Hence the Mu'min (believer), who believes in Allah,

believes through contact and association with those human beings who are revealing the Word or the Message of God. The believer has to believe in not one, but all the Prophets, because he believes in the Source of the Prophets. If the Prophethood of some Prophets has been limited to specific localities or tribes, or if the message of some of these Prophets could not be authentically preserved during the course of history, one still cannot dismiss the Prophet for the sheer reason that the Message he brought is not at present available to mankind

قُولُوٓا ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِۦمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ
وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝ فَإِنْ ءَامَنُوا۟
بِمِثْلِ مَآ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦ فَقَدِ ٱهْتَدَوا۟ ۖ وَّإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِى شِقَاقٍ ۖ
فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ۝

Say (O Muslims): We believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the prophets[73] received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered.[74] (2.136-137)

Therefore, to the People of the Book أَهْلَ الْكِتَٰبِ the Holy Quran says

قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا
يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُولُوا۟ ٱشْهَدُوا۟ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

Say. O people of the Scripture! Let us come to an agreement between ourselves that we shall worship none but *Allah*, that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and none of us shall take others for lord beside

73. This refers to even those who have not been specifically named in the Holy Quran.

74. The Quran uses the word 'Muslim", he who has surrendered. Therefore, every one who surrenders to Allah, with a proper recognition of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Prophets is a Muslim.

Allah. And if they turn away, then say Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered unto Him. (3 64)

The Word of God, lost, betrayed and disorted out of shape through the oraganised interference of self-styled followers of Christ, therefore, had to be brought back into the historical consciousness of humanity, in order that it is properly preserved and properly obeyed. The Word of God, therefore, was rediscovered in the message of the Quran revealed through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) Jesus himself anticipated the advent of *another Counsellor, 'to be with you for ever"*, who *"will guide you into all the truth;* for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears, he will speak."[75] The Gospel of St. Barnabas reiterates it and the Holy Quran confirms it [76]

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَٰبَنِي إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُم مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ

مِنَ التَّوْرَىٰةِ وَمُبَشِّرًۢا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنۢ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُۥٓ أَحْمَدُ

And when Jesus son of Mary said O children of Israel! Lo! I am the messenger of Allah unto you, confirming that which was (revealed) before me in the Torah, and bringing good tidings of a messenger who cometh after me, whose name is the Praised One.[77] (61 6)

Jesus confirmed the truth of the original teachings of *Torah* and announced the advent of Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) who was to be the last of the Prophets.[78] Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) equally confirmed the unadulterated teachings of Jesus, communicated the Word of God as revealed to him

75. Gospel of St. John, 14 15; 16 12 13.

وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰٓ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ

76. Vide the Appendix I and Appendix II.

77. "Ahmad". literally meaning the "Praised one" is one of the names of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). 'The promised 'Comforter' was believed by many Christian communities of the East to be a prophet yet to come, and most of them accepted Muhammad as that prophet. "(Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Quran*, p. 738, footnote 2.) This is also the exact equivalent of the Greek 'Periklytos' (Vide Appendix I).

78 Cf. St. John, 'And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Counsellor, *to be with you for ever.* ' (Gospel of St. John, 14–16).

and built up a State wherein he demonstrated how the Will of God could prevail.[79] As the Word of God revealed in the form of the Holy Quran has been preserved intact (unmolested by any interpolations of any kind) and as the Prophet Muhammad has come to guide not a particular tribe or a local people, the function of Prophethood has been finalised in the person and teachings of Muhammad (P.B U.H.).[80]

If the Jews, in rejecting the revelation vouchsafed through Jesus, were actually denying themselves a proper contact with the word of God, and were, therefore, voluntarily losing what was likely to be of extreme benefit to themselves,[81] let us in all humility pray to God that we should not be amongst those who repudiate the teachings of Muhammad without giving them a fair trial in our hearing, in our understanding and in our actions. *Amen.*

Appendix I

Even the present version of the Bible has been announcing the advent of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.). John, 1.19-25 would establish beyond the possibility of doubt that besides Christ and Elijah, the Jews and the Levites had been expecting the arrival of 'the prophet". This prophet had been expected with such common assurance that it was enough to refer to him by the words 'the prophet". The prophecies about the advent of the future "ruler of the world"

79. As illustrated in the glorious period of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) himself and that of the first four Caliphs.

80. Cf. the verse of the Holy Quran

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed my favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion *Al-Islam* (i.e. "surrender to Allah) *(al-Quran, 5:3)*

Cf. also:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the messenger of Allah and the Last of the Prophets and Allah is aware of all things. (al-Quran, 33.40)

81. i.e. admission into life eternal.

occur in the Gospel of St. John Chapters 14-16. For instance,

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and *He will give you another Counsellor, to be with you for ever,* even *the Spirit of truth,* whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him." (14:15-17)

And Again,

"These things I have spoken to you, while I am still with you. But the Counseller, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, *he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.* *(14:25)*

And now I have told you before it takes place, *so that when it does take place, you may believe.* I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power *over me; but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father."* (14:29-30)

This complete self-abnegation in the mission of the Lord, comples him to announce the advent of *another* Counseller. Jesus recognises himself as one and anticipates *another,* viz. the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) This Counsellor is reported to bear witness to and confirm the teachings of Jesus (John 15 26). Jesus also tells that, in the continuity of the Mission that he brings from God, it is only necessary that he goes so that the Counsellor may come.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth *it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counsellor will not come to you.* And when he comes, *he will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment: of* sin, because they do not believe in me;

of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged." (John, 16:7-11)

When this Future Counsellor will come, his revelation will be a comprehensive vision of truth

"When the Spirit of truth comes, *he will guide you into all the truth;* for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak and he will declare to you the things that are to come." (John, 16:12-13)

This Spirit of truth, who will be with us for ever, because he is not going to be replaced by anyone after him, who will be entrusted with the communication of the most perfect kind of truth, covering all aspects of life, will be speaking not on his behalf but on behalf of God [82]

وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۝ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ۝

Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire. It is not save an inspiration that is inspired. (53:2—4)

In this context it may be worth while to point out that the language which Jesus was employing for communication amongst his fellowmen, was that branch of the Aramaic language which is known as Syriac. Hebrew had ceased to be used something like two hundred fifty years before the arrival of Jesus on the scene. The influence of the Seleucid and the Roman empire, had equally occasioned the use of the Greek language,. Yet, this was naturally restricted to a very small minority of officials of administration. In spite

82. Jesus himself says about his own words "and the word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.' *John,* 14.24, The Quranic and the Biblical phrasing of St. John himself is visualising the 'word' here, not as the neo-Platonic 'Logos", but as the word received from God and communicated to men.

of the former control of the Seleucid empire, Greek was so little used by the common people that when Titus, the Roman emperor wanted to address the people of Jerusalem after the conquest of Jerusalem in 70 (A.C.) his Greek address had had to be translated in the Syriac language.

Secondly, the four evangelical gospels have been recorded by those Greek-speaking Christians who were converted to Christianity after the departure of Jesus. The details of the actions and speeches of Jesus reported by these apostles had not been kept in any kind of a written record; they had been carried on through a kind of oral tradition. They were further subjected to the stress of translation from a Semitic into an Aryan language, with all the concomitant confusions possible to two different idioms and two different cultural contexts. This leaves a good deal of doubt as to the success in the precise communication of ideas conveyed by Jesus and translated by the narrators of the Gospels. The word "son" could very well be the translation of 'Abd" (slave, servant), and once the translation was decided upon, it was likely to open up a passage for further confusion. This is quite apart from the liberty taken by translators and editors to change or interpolate new ideas in order to clarify the issues as visualised by their own selves. A similar shift appears to have taken place in the change of the word "Parakletus" for the original Greek word "Periklytos." The Christians state that the Greek word employed for "the Counsellor" is "Parakletus'. But the word "Parakletus" in the Greek language has a number of meanings; it can mean "a calling upon, appealing, entreaty, an exhortation, an address; called to one's aid, advocate, legal assistant, Comforter. "The word "Periklytos", however means "heard all round, famous, renowned, glorious, (Lat. inclytus) " This would be the exact equivalent of the Syriac word "Mun hamanna' in the Syriac or the word "Ahmad" in Arabic. This is the actual word used by Ibne Hisham (using, even the earlier authority of Ibn Ishaq) in his translation of the passage from the Gospel

of St. John.[83] It will be of interest to remember that the language of Palestine continued to be Syrian well into the ninth century A.C. This region had been conquered by the Muslims in the first half of the seventh century A.C. Hence it would have been easy for the Muslims of this period to know and verify the actual words used in Syriac regarding this prophecy of Jesus. That certainly would be closer as an interpretation than the Greek word employed later. It is, therefore, justifiable to assume that the actual Greek word employed in the text was "Periklytos", which was subsequently changed into "Parakletus" to suit the particular interpretation favourable to the reigning orthodoxy and to save the world from a likely conversion to Islam under the very authority of the Gospels themselves. This would equally account for preventing the Christian world from becoming familiar with the Gospel of St. Barnabas.[84]

Appendix II

(The Gospel of St. Barnabas) *(Evangelium Barnabe).*

The way in which the Christian world has been prevented from studying the Gospel of St. Barnabas is equally an interesting story. Included in the Codex Siniaticus well into the forth century,[85] it was put on the Index of Prohibited Books [86] by St. Gelasius at the end of the fifth century. During the sixteenth century, only a single copy of its Italian translation was available in the library of Pope Sixtus and nobody was permitted to read it. In the beginning of

83. quoted by Syed Abul Ala Maududi, *Tafhimul Quran*. Volume V p. 465.
84. Though this Gospel had been put on the Index of Forbidden Books by Pope Gelasius in the 5th Century.
85. See page supra.
86. *Index librorum prohibitorum.*

the eighteenth century, John Toland[87] got hold of this copy, which, circulating through various hands, found its entry into the Imperial Library of Vienna in 1738. An English translation of this same copy was accidentally published by the Clarendon Press, Oxford in 1907. Realizing, however, that this cuts at the root of the orthodox Christian beliefs, its copies were withdrawn from publication and none can lay his hands on them. A Spanish translation of this same Italian version was available in the eighteenth century, which has been mentioned by George Sale in the Introduction of his English translation of *the Holy Quran;* but even that has somehow disappeared.[88]

The first person who disclosed the presence of this Italian version of the Gospel of St. Barnabas was a Latin monk, named Framino, who embraced Islam as a result of reading it.

87. John. Toland, (1670–1722) a British deist is to be remembered for his book *Christianity not Mysterious* (1696) which was burnt by the hangman by order of the Irish Parliament. Later, he also wrote *Nazarenus: or Jewish, Gentile and Mahometan Christianity* (1718)

88. The reader is referred to Syed Abul A'ala Maududi, *Tafhimul Quran,* V. pp. 466–475) and Muhammad Abu Zuhra, *Muhadharat fi al-Nasraniah,* pp. 57–68.

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